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Carter political guru

A day in life of Jordan:
'I'm a short-order cook'By CARL P. LEUBSDORF
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Washington—In Jimmy Carter's White House, an informal and low-key, 32-year-old Georgian named Hamilton Jordan occupies the large corner office from which H. R. Haldeman and Gen. Alexander M. Haig ran the government in the Nixon years.

Everyone seems to agree he isn't the chief of staff—there isn't any in this administration—but the problem comes in trying to define the trouble-shooting role that the former campaign manager performs for Mr. Carter.

"I do whatever comes up," he says. "I'm a short-order cook."

To get some idea of the dimensions of his role, a reporter from *The Sun* sought and was granted permission to spend a day with Mr. Jordan, sitting in on a variety of meetings, with the provision that some specifics be left off the record.

What emerged was a picture of a man heavily involved in both domestic and foreign affairs, with emphasis on the political

aspects of both, perhaps involved in more areas than any other presidential adviser.

Here is how the day—July 14—went:

7.20 A.M.—Less than six hours after he left, following a post-midnight session in the Situation Room over the American helicopter shot down by North Korea, Mr. Jordan is back in the office. His efficient executive secretary, Eleanor Connors, a 20-year White House veteran without whom he would be lost, has already been there for 10 minutes.

7.45 A.M.—Meeting in the Oval Office with the President and his congressional liaison, Frank Moore, a daily session on the day's congressional situation. "It's really Frank's meeting," Mr. Jordan says. "He does 90 per cent of the talking."

8.30 A.M.—The assistant to the President is at work on his first project of the day: Sending the President and senior staff members copies of a cartoon in the *Jerusalem Post* that parodies American pressure for Israeli withdrawal from oc-

cupied territories by showing what it could be like if the United States had to give up everything beyond its original 13 colonies, plus internationalize New York.

He is tieless and coatless, his sleeves

rolled up, an informal attire he maintains all day. A tie is neatly folded on his desk, about the only neat thing there. He looks around the vast office, decorated with modern art, its book shelves half filled.

"It's a great office," he muses. "There've been some great crooks here." (Actually only one, Haldeman, who is currently in jail in California for his role in the Watergate coverup.)

8.50 A.M.—Phone call from Lt. Gov. Brantley Harvey of South Carolina, worried because he is being opposed for governor in the Democratic primary next year by Dick Riley, who ran the Carter campaign in the state.

"We're going to stay neutral," he assures Mr. Harvey. "But we're not going to deny our friendship with Dick."

Off the phone, he quickly puts in a call to Mr. Riley to apprise him of the lieutenant governor's call. "He must be worried about you," he says with a laugh, repeating his intention of neutrality.

9.05 A.M. Miss Connors, a small, attractive brunette in her early 40's who has worked for such notables as physicist Jerome Wiesner and Charles Alan Wright, the law professor, enters to go over the stack of phone messages.

One is from a pro-Carter senator. "I really think you should call him," she says. Mr. Jordan agrees but doesn't get around to it that day. She mentions another senatorial call. "I talked to him enough this week—once," Mr. Jordan responds.

As he awaits his next scheduled meeting, he is asked about his newly assumed role in foreign policy matters. "I've been a foreign policy expert for five months," he says, then quickly points out, "I'm not really involved in any foreign policy decisions. I try to stay involved in terms of political implications. Everything is political."

9.20 A.M.—The reorganizers, he discloses, wanted to re-establish the position of chief of staff and give it to him. "I told them that was ridiculous."

"First, Carter wouldn't want it. Then, I'm not qualified to be chief of staff. If you breed me and [domestic policy adviser] Stip Eizenstat together, you could do it."

9.25 A.M.—He goes to the refrigerator and gets out his first Tab of the day. ("But not the last," says the chunky 5-foot 10-inch, 180-pound operative, who is addicted to the diet soft drink.)

9.27 A.M. Phone call from A. D. Frazier, who headed the reorganization team to revamp the President's office. They set up a 10.15 A.M. meeting.

9.30 A.M.—The daily political meeting, bringing together Mr. Jordan's top aides—Landon Butter, Mark Siegel, Betty Rainwater and Laurie Lucey—plus representatives of Mr. Moore, Mr. Mondale and the Democratic National Committee. The subject is the voter registration bill, due for House debate in about a week. They count more than 200 votes for it and discuss about 30 doubtful or wavering Democrats.

Someone is assigned to assure or pressure each one.

In the middle of the meeting, actor Kirk Douglas, accompanied by former White House aide Jack Valenti, now head of the Motion Picture Association of

America, come in to see the office. "He makes almost as much as you make in the White House," Mr. Valenti says.

"No one makes that much money," says Mr. Jordan, who gets \$56,000 a year, more than double what he made during the campaign.

10.30 A.M.—Meeting on executive reorganization with Mr. Frazier, White House counsel Robert J. Lipshutz and Harrison Wellford, who head the whole reorganization effort. They discuss some final decisions, and when they will break the news to some top aides who don't yet know how many assistants they are losing.

One of the biggest problems, it turns out, came when they tried to cut Mrs. Carter's staff. Mr. Wellford tells about how Mr. Carter sent Mr. Frazier, a Georgia bank executive, to explain the situation to his wife.

"A. D.," she said, 'the President told me you said ours was the worst organized unit in the place,' " Mr. Wellford relates. "And A. D. said, 'No, I said you were the least busy.' " They all laugh. Mr. Jordan, occasionally bored, strolls around the room, looking out at a sunny, clear day.

Everything finally is resolved, except how to tell Peter Bourne, a longtime Carter adviser who is disliked by many other aides, that his drug abuse staff is being cut.

11.10 A.M.—Private meeting with Peter Bourne.

11.35 A.M.—Carlton Hicks and Jimmy Bishop, old Georgia friends of both Mr. Carter and Mr. Jordan come in to put the arm on for a pal of theirs, Vern Martin, who wants to be regional head of the Economic Development Administration in Atlanta. ("Every President has old friends," a secretary says. "You can't do anything about that.")

"I'm going to get somebody to work on ol' Vern," Mr. Jordan announces. He calls Jim Gammill, deputy head of the personnel office and asks Miss Connors to call Sidney Harmon, under secretary of commerce.

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